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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: TAIWAN'S UN REFERENDUM, TAIWAN'S  
SOVEREIGNTY STATUS

11. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage September 29-October 1 on the DPP's controversial "normal country resolution," which was subsequently passed during the party's national congress Sunday, rejecting an amendment proposed by outgoing Chairman Yu Shyi-kun; on the 2008 presidential election; and on a university students who went missing in early July and were found again last Friday.

12. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" said that, despite the fact that the recent souring of relations between Taiwan and the United States over the Chen Shui-bian administration's push for a UN referendum is not good in and of itself, it helps reduce the possibility of China using force against Taiwan. Heritage Foundation Senior Research Fellow John Tkacik opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" that "now is the time for Taiwan to reeducate the international community that the idea that Taiwan is an 'integral part of the People's Republic of China' is, as the State Department told the UN, 'not universally held by UN member states, including the United States.'" End summary.

### 13. Taiwan's UN Referendum

"Taiwan and the United States Are on Bad Terms, but There Are  
'Auspicious Signs' within the Gloomy Prospects"

Professor Lin Chong-pin from Tamkang University's Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies, opined in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (10/1):

"... The United States, as [U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State] Thomas Christensen said, attaches great importance to Taiwan's strategic position. But Taipei's failure to coordinate with Washington before it started this eye-catching campaign to push for its UN bid has disrupted the United States' plan and thus annoyed Washington. The long-term significance of this matter is as follows:

"First, Taiwan will become more isolated in terms of international politics. Even though Taiwan's interaction with the world will not be affected, and its military relationship with the United States remains stable for the short term, Taiwan's elbow room in the international community will only be further reduced, given deteriorating Taiwan-U.S. relations. Taiwan's allies in Latin America were mostly anti-Communist countries during the Cold War era, and they have always followed the lead of the United States. Once Washington turns the cold shoulder to Taiwan's political leaders, these countries will unavoidably veer with the circumstances, not to mention the fact that Beijing is trying very hard to win them over to its side.

"Second, Beijing is the biggest winner. Taiwan used to be one of the staunchest allies of the United States in East Asia, but its

political ties with the United States have started to cool down. ... The fact that Taiwan and the United States are on bad terms has resulted in one additional weakening strategic pillar in East Asia for the United States. Moreover, the chances are getting smaller for Beijing to use force against Taiwan. As the consequences of Beijing's move to 'restrain Taiwan via the United States' remain to be seen, there is no need for Beijing to attack Taiwan now. ... If peace across the Taiwan Strait is considered a good prospect, then one can say that there are at least 'some auspicious signs' when it comes to the gloomy fact that Taiwan and the United States are on bad terms politically."

#### 14. Taiwan's Status

"Taiwan's Status Remains Unsettled"

John Tkacik, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, opined in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (10/1):

"... While it might not seem like it, this year marks a significant move forward for Taiwan's international status. For the first time in a quarter-century, the US Department of State was obliged to reiterate its 'long standing' position that the US has 'not formally recognized Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan and [has] not made any determination as to Taiwan's political status.' Formal recognition or not, the US Code treats Taiwan as it does all other 'foreign countries, nations, states, governments, or similar entities.' For US' legal purposes, at least, Taiwan is indeed a state. Moreover, given that Taiwan possesses 'a permanent population; a defined territory; government; and capacity to enter into relations with the other states,' it meets the description of a 'state' under the 1933 Montevideo Convention (which the US ratified on June 29, 1934).

"This precise point -- that Taiwan is, de facto, a state in the

international community, despite the fact that the US does not recognize de jure that Taiwan is independent -- was at the heart of the State Department's alarmed demarche to the UN barely two months ago. It now appears that the US government is finally returning to its 'long-standing' position that Taiwan's sovereignty is 'unsettled.' ... Once Americans get into the habit of thinking of Taiwan's 'sovereignty' as 'undetermined,' it is just a short distance to the question: 'Who has sovereignty over Taiwan if not the people of Taiwan?' Ultimately, the people of Taiwan must determine their own future. But now is not the time for Taiwan to leap into such a decision without careful preparation or without close consultation with its most important friends. Now is the time for Taiwan to reeducate the international community that the idea that Taiwan is an 'integral part of the People's Republic of China' is, as the State Department told the UN, 'not universally held by UN member states, including the United States.'"

YOUNG